

# Dexter Lakes Association

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

JUNE, 2003

Annual Meeting - July 10, 2003 7 pm  
Knights of Columbus Hall, Dexter, Maine

## President's Point of View:

Since last year's annual Dexter Lakes Association (DLA) meeting, the Board of Directors has been active in attending

regional and state lakes association meetings and working on local concerns with the Dexter Utility and Water District and Town Officials. The mission of DLA continues to include water quality and resource protection, recreational use, and protection of the water sheds of Echo Lake and Lake Wassookeag.

DLA continues to support its mission statement of "PRESERVATION" with volunteers and respond to membership issues and concerns. We have solicited input from State IFW & DEP and Department of Human Services, Maine Drinking Water Program and the Maine Water Utility District Organization and together we have attended and testified at Dexter public hearings on key water quality protection and development issues.

During the past year, I have received the most calls regarding concerns on the water level on Lake Wassookeag. It is noted that the water level on June 24, 2003 was eight inches higher than normal. The higher water level, we believe, has adversely affected access and water quality. This spring, during high winds, the south shore exhibited excessive soil erosion and discoloration of the water was visible several feet from shore. Lake testing conducted this Spring with the Secchi Disc documented a four foot decrease in visibility. The board is convinced that the water level needs to be more aggressively managed and we will be working with the Town and Utility District to review the dam operation and potential corrective action.

DLA has learned of action taken last fall by the State of Maine, DEP to close the boat fueling pump at A.E. Robinson's store on Little Lake Wassookeag. Opening of the fuel pumps this season has not been completed and will require some modification. Representatives of A.E. Robinson's will be attending the annual meeting to solicit comments on the loss of this service.

### Dexter Lake Association Board of Directors

President, Steve Wintle	924-5559
Vice President, Ed Graham	924-5672
Treasurer, Peggy Kaufman	924-5123
Secretary-clerk, Jack Emory	924-3660
Neil Crane	924-7582
Bob Crawford	924-7549
Lois Richmond (Echo Lake)	924-5964
Stan Russell	924-7852
George Sampson (Echo Lake)	924-6626
Al Tempesta	924-1059

Last year we were enthusiastic to learn of potential state grants for camp road way evaluation and correction to control run off. DLA learned at last year's annual meeting the camp roads are the number one polluter of lakes and streams by providing a pollution pathway for phosphorus and the contaminants that cause algae blooms and oxygen depletion. DLA has been informed that the grant was approved for Echo Lake, although Lake Wassookeag was not. We continue to work with the Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District in that endeavor.

In closing, DLA volunteers can make things happen. As partners, we have accomplished much but we are still a young and growing organization. We expect to do more in the future!

The Board of Directors and I look forward to this year's DLA meeting. I look forward to hearing from membership and extend an invitation to the public. Your input matters!

—Steve Wintle, President

# LAKE MONITORING

## Lake Monitoring

For the past two years, Bob Crawford has been monitoring Lake Wassookeag for water clarity.

Bob is a member of the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP). He has attended training sessions in order to be qualified to take Secchi Disc readings which determine water quality in Lake Wassookeag.

According to Scott Williams, Executive Director of the program, "it is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of Maine lakes and ponds through the acquisition of scientific data, and to enhance public awareness about the sensitivity and value of our water resources".

### *Our Association supports these ideals*

Volunteer lake monitors make an enormous contribution to the State of Maine every year.

Scott Williams was a speaker at last year's Dexter Lakes Association annual meeting. Our contact with this group has been very helpful to our young organization.

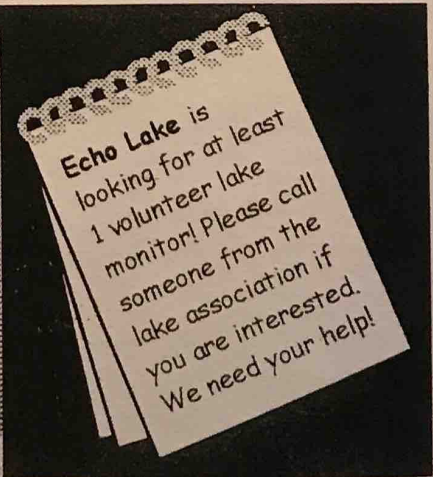
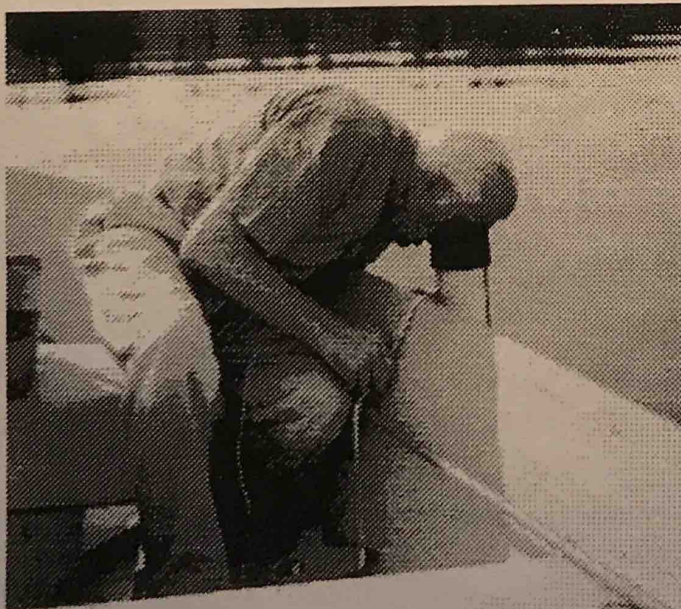
We would like to be able to increase our testing ability to include the monitoring of dissolved oxygen, phosphorus and chlorophyll levels as well as other chemical and biological information.

Quinn Dillon from Exeter, Maine, who is a friend of the Dexter Lakes Association conducted extensive tests of mercury levels in lake fish in 50 Maine Lakes. Lake Wassookeag was not part of his study but he did test the yellow perch from our lake. The perch tested 0.28 ppm which is well over the Safe Eating Reference Dose.

Mercury pollution comes from elsewhere, but the more we are able to evaluate what is happening on Lake Wassookeag and inform the public, the better chance we will have to keep the lake safe and clean.

A special thanks to Bob for all his hard work!

— Ed Graham



### Lake Musings

Summer 2002-Late summer, almost fall and still warm and beautiful but it is different from a month ago. It is quiet. Parents have packed up and moved back home in order to get the children back in school before Labor Day. When did this happen? Labor Day used to be the last family holiday before school opened and everyone came together for one last togetherness amid good-byes to summer friends.

The Loons are beginning to gather from all sections of the Lake. Fall colors are beginning to show, docks are being pulled in and it is time to put a sweater and socks on in the late afternoon—a sure sign that there is change in store. The days are shortening and the sun is lower in the sky.

Who said the colors would not be good this year because of our dry, wonderfully warm summer? As it turns out, the colors are magnificent and seem most brilliant in the early morning when the lake is mirror-like and the reflection of the trees in the lake creates a double image that cannot be done justice by a photograph, but we try. There is certain sadness about this whole thing balanced by the extreme happiness that the first signs of warmth brought six months ago. Fall is beautiful, but we know the next step - best to live in the moment. It was a warm fall until late October when we had an unseasonable spell of cold weather that caught some of us off-guard. The leaves were still on the trees as we were just past peak color and it snowed!!! The Loons are exercising their wings in preparation for practicing the take-off and landings. Their sounds are different now—quieter, more subdued.

First weekend in November and the temperature is in the 60's. On Monday the 4th, we hit 63 degrees. All thoughts of winter were put on hold for a moment until we realized that this was, most probably, the last chance to "button up". It's a good thing we did because Saturday the 16th and Sunday the 17th, the weather came in with a vengeance bringing cold air from Canada and wet weather from the coast. It is now Sunday night and, after significant icing, it is snowing again. The Loons are still here. Hopefully, there will be another mini-thaw so the oak leaves can be raked up and cleaned out of the gutters. They hang on until the very end showing us that Mother Nature is indeed, the boss.

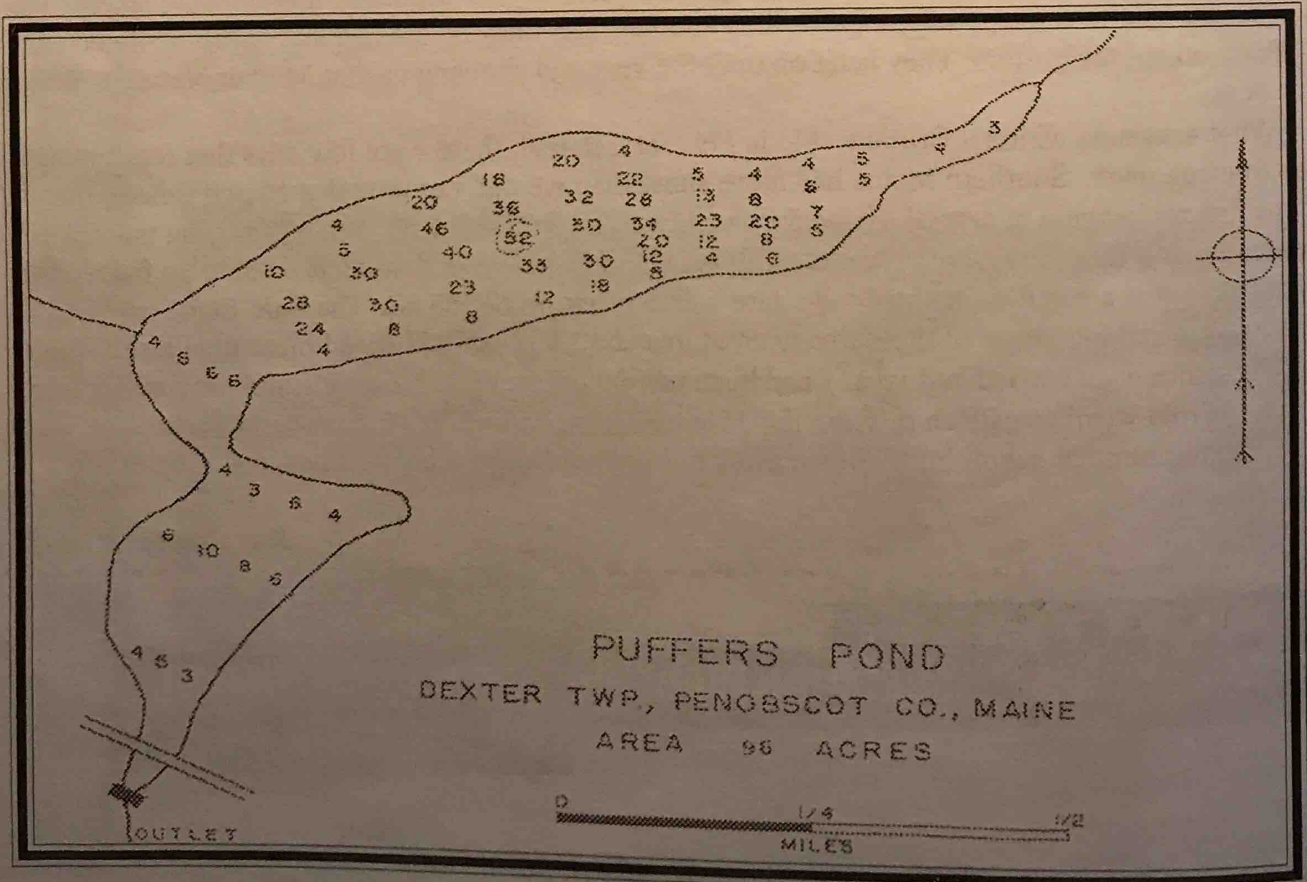
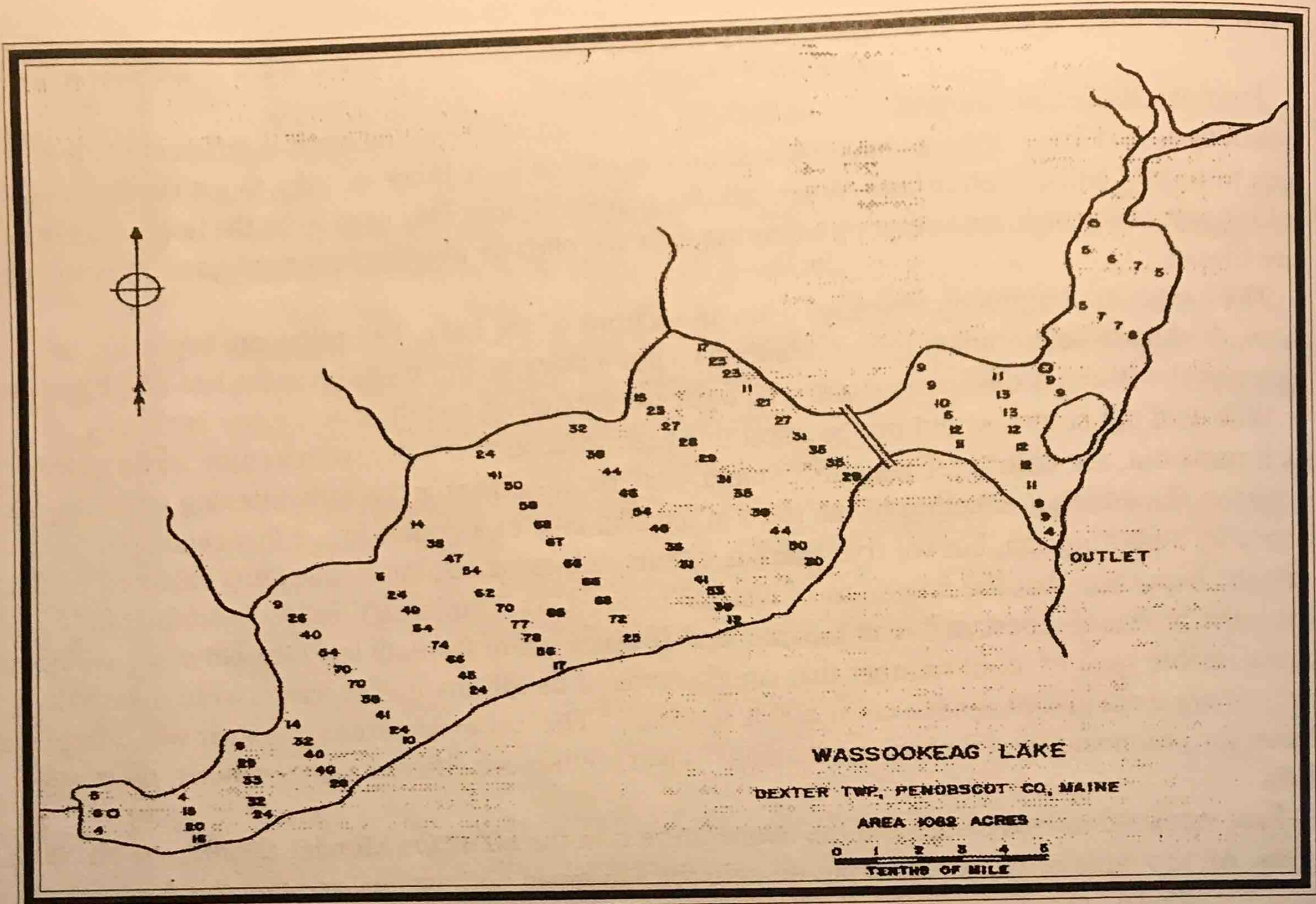
What a strange winter!! Brutally cold in February, in fact, there were few days that reached up to the freezing mark. Southern Maine had more snow than we did, but now that March is here, the snow has set in again in central Maine followed by more cold arctic air. While watching the sun come up, something caught my eye on the deck. It was an Ermine weasel, which had come up from under the deck. What a beautiful animal - all white with a black tip on the tail. The Bald Eagle circled a bit later - no mistaking either of these lovely creatures and I felt I should spend more time just looking out the window as I wondered what I had been missing! The wind is blowing and the forecast is for a very stormy weather pattern through the 15th of March - good for outdoor enthusiasts!!!

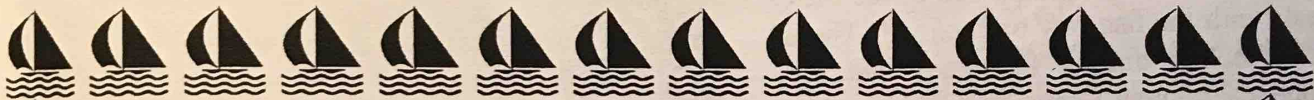
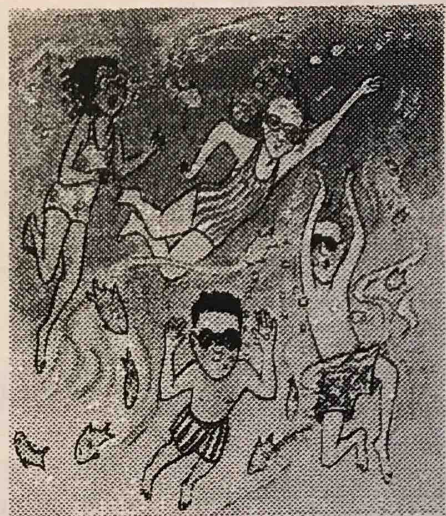
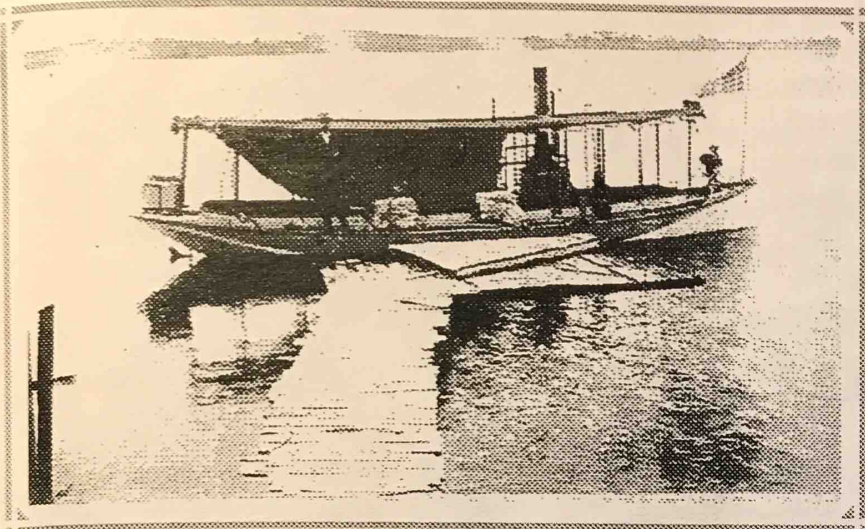
For now, summer seems but a dream away but it won't be long before I hear the song of the Loons again.

— Kay Emory

**Dexter Lakes Association Website - Under Construction**

stay tuned for more information —



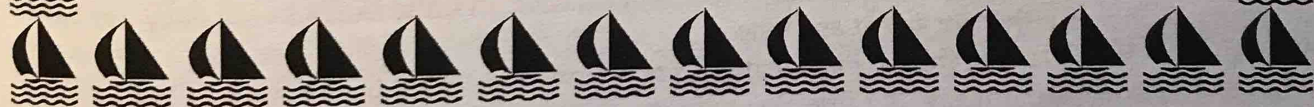


### Days Gone By

Looking at historical pictures of the lake makes you realize how many years people have been able to enjoy the lake and feel appreciation for being able to have a clean lake to use today.

Early boats such as the one in the above picture probably did not contribute very much pollution to the lake but modern day concerns, such as gasoline additives, increased usage, and so on gives us the responsibility of making sure we pass on to future lake users a clean lake as well.

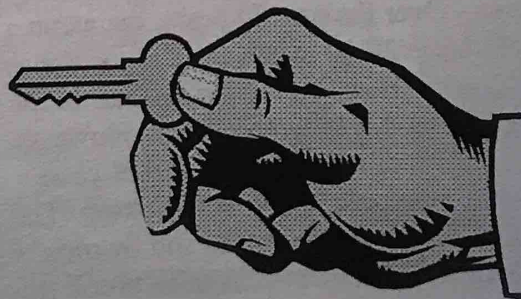
We would appreciate you sending us any old lake pictures that we could use on our website - which we hope to provide in the near future (photographs will be returned if you include appropriate postage).



## Important Notice

Dexter Lakes Association Meeting  
July 10, 2003  
7:00 pm  
Knights of Columbus Hall  
Dexter, Maine

The key to our success is your involvement. Please attend DLA's annual meeting, become a member of the Association and get involved in keeping our lakes a place to enjoy for generations to come.



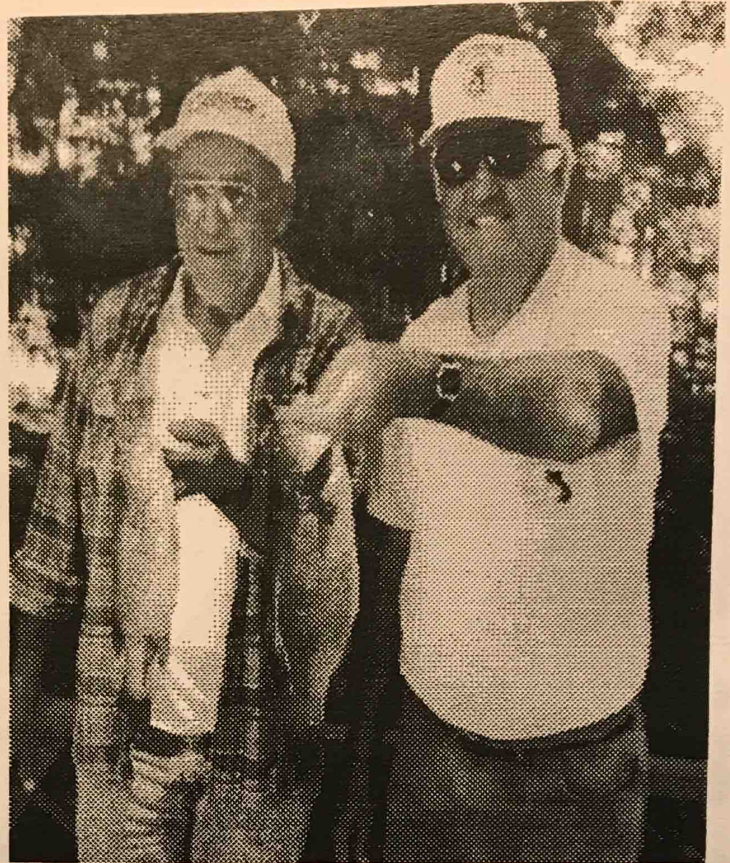
### Fishing on Lake Wausaukee

Over time, I would have to say the cold water fish have declined and the warm water fish have taken over. Less trout and more bass. I see sun fish now that I never saw years ago. The smallmouth bass have maintained their status. They, like deer, seem to adapt to people. During the summer, you can see them under people's docks and boats.

The taste and food value of the fish has remained the same. However, as you know, the state warns not to eat fish caught in the lakes very often. My thoughts are "has the state completed their tests with the fish raw or cooked?" There is a feeling among fishermen that the chemical content would be different when meat or fish are cooked.

Below is a listing of the types of fish that are currently in Lake Wausaukee and a few comments about each.

— John Bartosenski



**Catfish (bullhead)** - Small (6-8 inches) bullheads are found the shallows behind the island after sunset. In Little Wausaukee they will be found everywhere and can be caught during the day when overcast.

**Pickrel (chain)** - Will be found in very small numbers behind the island anytime during the day in Large Wausaukee. They are not usually more than 10-12 inches. In Little Wausaukee, they will be found up to 20 inches anywhere and at any time.

**Yellow Perch** - Will be found from Camp Dexter point westward in 25-30 feet of water. They will only grow to 8-9 inches normally. In Little Wausaukee, they are the same length but will be found everywhere.

**Smallmouth Bass** - Are probably the number one sport fish in Big Wausaukee. They grow to 16-18 inches and can be caught along the shoreline during June and early July. This is the spawn time. This fish has maintained its numbers during this 25 year period.

**Burbot** - I have never caught this fish in any Wausaukee Lake.

**Smelt** - Again, I have never fished for them.

**Lake Trout** - Over the past 20 years, the number of Lake Trout has declined. In the past, it was not uncommon to see 20-24 inches trout along the shore after ice-out in early May. Now, an occasional trout of 18 inches is caught during ice-out. In the summer with a fish finder, they will be seen 30-90 feet down. This is due to temperatures. However, they may not be seen in shallows early on due to the large numbers of speedboats in recent years.

**Salmon** - Rarely caught in Big Wausaukee. The last one I caught during ice-out was 20 years ago. They are fished with streamer flies and fly rods. Again, they may be in deep water as are lake trout.

**Stocked Fish** - The State puts in small brook trout each year near the shore road and the state highway.

## PUFFER'S POND OR ECHO LAKE (AND, DOES IT MATTER?)

Who would have imagined that a quiet little pond would have such an interesting past. In 1955, an act of legislation legally changed the name of the little pond from Puffer's Pond to Echo Lake. The interesting part of this change was that it was done without notifying Dexter residents, including the two grandsons of the local citizen of long ago in whose honor the pond was named. Evidentially, a group of cottage owners wanted the name changed.

No one seems to know how the name Echo Lake was chosen. A Dexter Gazette article from July of 1955 stated "though noted for its beauty, its fish and its ducks, (Puffer's Pond) has never been famed for any echo. There are believed to be several other lakes in Maine already answering to Echo."

It seems that the lake got its Puffer's name from Matthias Puffer, the sixth son of Daniel and Chloe Puffer, who were some of Dexter's earliest settlers. Matthias married Abigail Spooner, the daughter of a family who gave *its* name to the southern end of the pond - Spooner's Mill Pond.

Carol Feurtado from the Dexter Historical Society provided me with several editorials of the day from area residents who were, for the most part, unhappy about the change. One letter from Freeman N. Cobb stated, "You can go to the head of the pond and holler as loud as you can and all the Echo you will get is from a big Bull Frog down in the Cove weighing about 14 pounds...I have fished every foot of that old pond...In my book it will always be Puffer's Pond. Why change it?"

The last article I obtained from the Dexter Historical Society indicates that a group of Puffer's relatives were protesting the name change and were petitioning the Legislature to change it back. Did they? Well, I was unable to find out! Maybe you can discover the answer. It seems as though Carol Feurtado's great-great-grandfather, Nathaniel Curtis, owned a farm that was originally part of Puffer Farm. She indicates Curtis' farm was where Dr. Johnson's place is now.

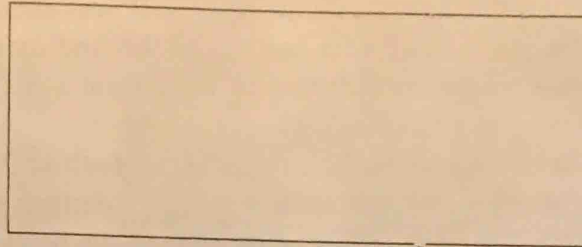
You might say what does it matter and maybe it doesn't. All I know is that every summer since 1965, I have spent hour upon hour swimming in the spring-feed waters of this little pond. Some of my happiest childhood memories took place in, on and around the pond. Countless fishing expeditions, rowing lessons and bull frog adventures fill my heart with warm feelings of lazy summer days. Since my daughter was born, we have spent at least five weeks a year at the pond. She too has come to love all that it has to offer. She caught her first fish, operated the boat motor for the first time, swam across the lake several times and back and forth to our neighbors, eaten dozens of trout, mimicked hundreds of Loon calls and fallen asleep to the chirping of thousands of crickets. Does it really matter what the pond's name is—maybe not, but to a little girl that used to run all the way down a dirt road, scamper down a hill, jump head-first into the cold water and rest on the shore all "puffed" out....well, what do you think I'll be calling it?

—Lois Richmond

Hillary Doll Richmond  
Age 5



Peggy Kaufman  
22 Tern In Lane  
Dexter, ME 04930



#### DEXTER LAKES ASSOCIATION

**REMOVE:** all plants from boats, motors, trailers, anchors, and fishing equipment before and after launching. Place plants in a trash can or on high, dry land.

**DISPOSE:** of cooler and live well water away from the shore after each use.

**AVOID:** driving, paddling or swimming through any plants.

**VOLUNTEER:** inform boaters, distribute flyers and learn, to identify invasive plants.



### *We Can Have Victory Over Milfoil!*

In a July 15, 2001 article in the Bangor Daily News, it was reported that the residents of Belleau Lake in Wakefield, New Hampshire is winning the battle of the milfoil weed.

Mercedes Kelly, president of the Belleau Lake Property Owners Association, indicated that the members of the association worked diligently to cut and pull up the weeds, bag them and take them away to prevent them from spreading. The state has also put chemicals in the lake for the past two years.

According to the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, the weed has traveled from Belleau to Balch Pond and has infected it.

The article mentions that Maine is also having a problem with Milfoil and that it now requires boaters to purchase stickers to pay for programs designed to keep invasive freshwater species out of the state.

So you see, it can be controlled with a lot of hard work but our best defense is a good offense. If we keep Milfoil from

coming into our lakes, we won't have to go through what these folks in New Hampshire have gone through and are still going through.

Keep in mind that once Milfoil comes into a lake, it doesn't leave. All we can do after it has shown up is to battle it year after year to keep it from taking over.

Please, follow the rules at the left to save our lakes.

— Lois Richmond